

23

**Testimony of  
Matthew Nemerson, President of the Connecticut Technology Council  
Speaking on March 4, 2008 to the Commerce Committee**

Distinguished chairmen and members of the committee, I represent a statewide community of over 2,500 technology oriented firms employing over 150,000 individuals whose jobs are related in some way to innovation and technology.

This is an exciting hearing and you are to be congratulated for the list of bills we are speaking to this morning which cover such a wide and important cross section of concepts, actions and programs that will support the transformation of our economy to one of growth and innovation.

The world may be flat, as Tom Freedman wrote, but all this means is that any region on earth is not capable of competing for the best new jobs and for the chance to build a regional economy that will produce higher wages and more opportunity. As the people on the top of the jungle gym – the highest wages and perhaps the best quality of life (on average) in the world – we are the both the role model and the target for every economy on the planet.

The bills you propose today show a breadth of wisdom and a call for action. I hope you area heard throughout this building.

We support just about everything you are discussing today. In particular we call your attention to incentives for investment in new companies under **SB 549**, you will hear more about the excellent concept Entrepreneur Tax Credit Program today but we urge your support with a few changes that will make the program more transparent to users. There may be elements in **SB 401** that could be added to this bill.

We support **HB 5782**, to give technology companies more of an opportunity to utilize unused tax credits. We would like to see this expanded to clearly include companies working in IT development and not just research.

We support several bills that pertain to efforts that we are undertaking on behalf of the state, **SB 398**, a continuation of our effort to support the growth of start-up innovation based companies which now includes work with over 300 such firms and we hope that you will include funding of at least \$175,000 in this bill to compliment existing efforts from the private sector and DECD.

We support **SB 546** to highlight the achievements of our more precocious high school students and to connect them to internship opportunities with the hope they will remain in the state either for college or afterwards. We hope you will add \$75,000 in funding with the caveat that we attempt to raise from foundations and businesses a matching amount.

Let me call your attention especially to **SB 541** to create an advanced manufacturing center, **SB 551** creating a nanotech center, **SB 393** about Bioscience facilities and **SB 566** regarding the Fuel Cell industry. While we cannot incentive every established technology based industry each of these bills speaks to support of a key part of our build industrial environment and then increasing our competitive position.

Around the country other states are investing millions and occasionally billions in enticing our business base to relocate. Efforts such as those described in these bills can help stem that tide and develop specific new support systems to retain industries here.

We would like to see **SB 542** expanded to include the exploration of IS, software shows that may help attract businesses and investment to compliment our expanding financial services software industry.

Let me also endorse your various bills speaking to the development and nurturing of our centers of excellence in the state, bills such as SB 389, SB 395, SB 396, and SB 544.

Let me congratulate you for the breadth and vision of today's hearing and challenge you have presented to all of us to commit Connecticut to growth and success in the technology based industries of tomorrow. Thank you.

# The innovation ladder to success has many steps

